

Application No. 10/596,657  
Amendment dated May 6, 2009  
Reply to Office Action dated February 10, 2009

**Amendment to the Drawings:**

Four (4) Replacement Sheets with four (4) corresponding Annotated Sheets showing the amendments to Figs. 1, 2, 3, and 5 of the drawings are enclosed.



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REMARKS

Claims 9-14 are pending and have been added. Claims 1-8 have been canceled.

Responsive to the Examiner's objection regarding the drawings, Applicants have amended Figs. 1-3 and 5 to designate the prelock assembly as "30" and to designate the pullback assembly as "31." Responsive to the Examiner's related objection regarding the specification, Applicants have amended paragraph [0017] of the specification as originally filed to use numeral 31 in connection with the pullback assembly.

Responsive to the Examiner's rejection of prior Claims 5-8 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, Applicants have obviated such rejections by the presentation of new independent Claim 9 and the claims depending therefrom.

The Examiner rejected prior Claims 5-8 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,913,467 to Washizu ("Washizu '467").

New independent Claim 9 calls for:

A conduit coupling, comprising:  
a hollow receiver including a receiving space; and  
an insert sealingly and lockingly insertable into said receiving space along an insertion direction, said insert including a retaining ring;  
said receiver further comprising:  
a locking element perpendicularly movable into said receiving space relative to said insertion direction between a raised position, a pushed-in position, and a prelocked position, said prelocked position being intermediate said pushed-in and said raised positions, said locking element including a transverse portion and a pair of arms extending from opposite ends of said transverse portion;  
said locking element having a first beveled surface, said first beveled surface engageable with said retaining ring, upon initial insertion of said insert into said receiving space to a first insertion position, to move said locking element from said pushed-in position to said raised position;  
said receiver further including a prelock assembly and a pullback assembly, said prelock and pullback assemblies cooperating with said retaining ring when said insert is inserted into said receiver beyond said first insertion position into a second insertion position in which said retaining ring has moved out of contact with said first beveled surface, wherein said prelock assembly prevents said retaining ring and said insert from being pulled out of said



receiver when said insert has moved into said second position; and said pullback assembly moves said locking element into said prelocked position;

said prelock assembly including a retaining portion formed on said transverse portion of said locking element, said retaining portion engaging said retaining ring in said second insertion position to prevent said insert from being pulled out of said receiver, and said arms of said locking element respectively including click-stop projections cooperating with snap-in projections of said retainer, said click-stop projections located adjacent to and on one side of said snap-in projections in said pushed-in position, and located adjacent to and on another side of said snap-in projections in said prelock position; and

said pullback assembly including second beveled surfaces respectively disposed on said arms of said locking element and associated with third beveled surfaces of said receiver, said second and third beveled surfaces cooperating to generate a force in a direction opposite to the direction of movement of said locking element from said prelocked position to said raised position.

New independent Claim 9 is not anticipated by Washizu '467 because Washizu '467 fails to disclose a conduit coupling including a locking element movable into a receiving space of a receiver, the locking element including a transverse portion and a pair of arms extending from opposite ends of the transverse portion, together with a prelock assembly including a retaining portion formed on the transverse portion of the locking element, the retaining portion engaging a retaining ring of an insert to prevent the insert from being pulled out of the receiver.

Referring Figs. 1 and 3 of the present application, the claimed conduit coupling includes locking element 10 movable into receiving space 7 of receiver 1, with locking element 10 including transverse portion 13 (Fig. 3) and a pair of arms 11 and 12 extending from opposite ends of transverse portion 13, together with a prelock assembly including a retaining portion 14 formed on transverse portion 13 of the locking element 10, and retaining portion 14 engaging retaining ring 2 of insert 3 to prevent insert 3 from being pulled out of receiver 1.

By contrast, in the assembly of Washizu '467, as shown in the locked condition of Fig. 4, for example, although confirmative member 8 and/or holder 4 may include arms (*i.e.*, pawls 8a of confirmative member 8 and pawl members 4a of holder 4), each of these elements lacks a transverse portion having opposite ends from such arms extend, with the transverse portion



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including a retaining portion formed thereon which engages a retaining ring of an insert to prevent the insert from being pulled out of the receiver, as claimed. Rather, in the Washizu '467 assembly, the tips of pawls 8a and/or the ends of pawl members 4a engage annular protruding wall 1a of conduit 1 to retain conduit 1 in position.

Additionally, the assembly of Washizu '467 fails to disclose a pullback assembly including second beveled surfaces respectively disposed on arms of a locking element, and that are associated with third beveled surfaces of a receiver, the second and third beveled surfaces cooperating to generate a force in a direction opposite to the direction of movement of the locking element from a prelocked position to a raised position, as called for in new independent Claim 9.

Referring to Fig. 3 of the present application, pullback assembly 31 includes second beveled surfaces 18 and 19 respectively disposed on arms 11 and 12 of locking element 10, which are associated with third beveled surfaces 22 and 23 of receiver 1, the second and third beveled surfaces cooperating to generate a force in a direction opposite to the direction of movement of locking element 10 from a prelocked position to a raised position

New dependent Claim 10 further calls for the locking member to be immovable along the insertion direction. Referring to Fig. 1 of the present application, it may be seen that locking element 10 is immovable along the insertion direction, i.e., along an axial direction of receiver 1, but rather is only movable in a radial direction with respect to receiver 1, i.e., between the raised position, the push-end position, and the prelocked position. By contrast, in the assembly of Washizu '467, the confirmative member 8 is axially movable with respect to joint body 2.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that new independent Claim 9, and the claims depending therefrom, are not anticipated by Washizu '467.

In the event Applicants have overlooked the need for an extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicants hereby petition therefore and authorize that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 02-0385, Baker & Daniels LLP.



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Should the Examiner have any questions regarding any of the above, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned at 260-460-1741.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adam F. Cox', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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Annotated Sheet

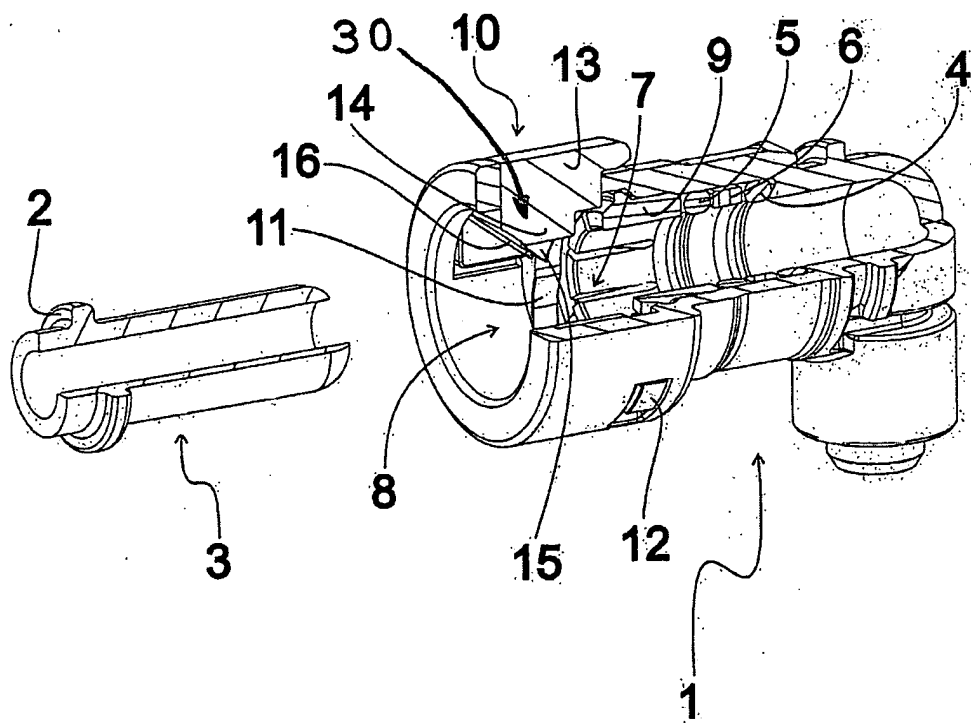


Fig. 1



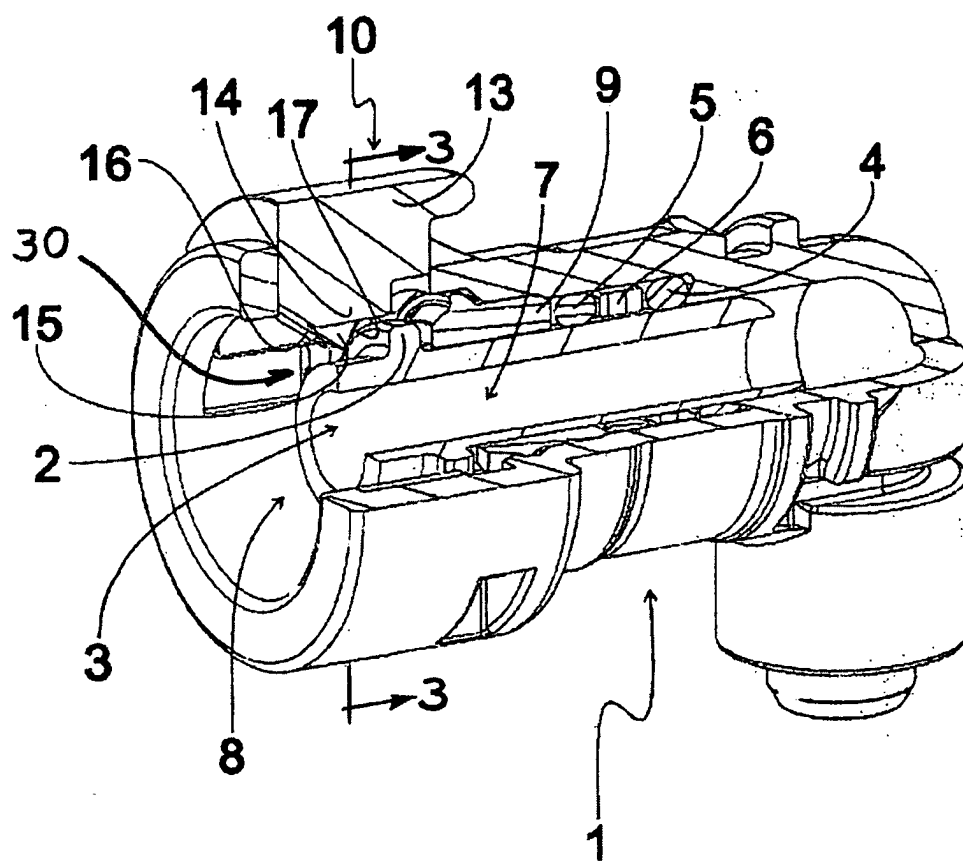
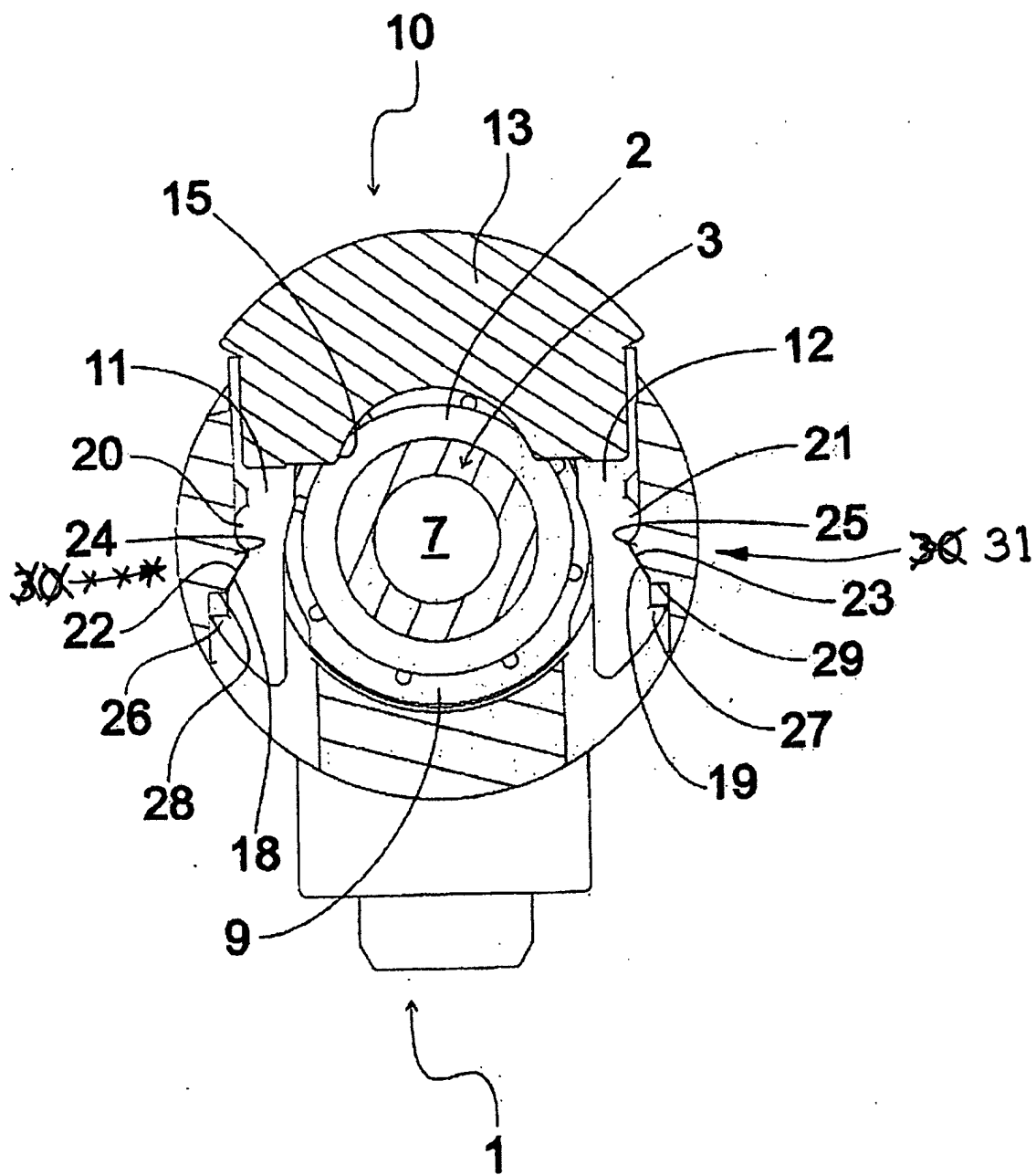


Fig. 2



## Annotated Sheet



**Fig. 3**



Annotated Sheet

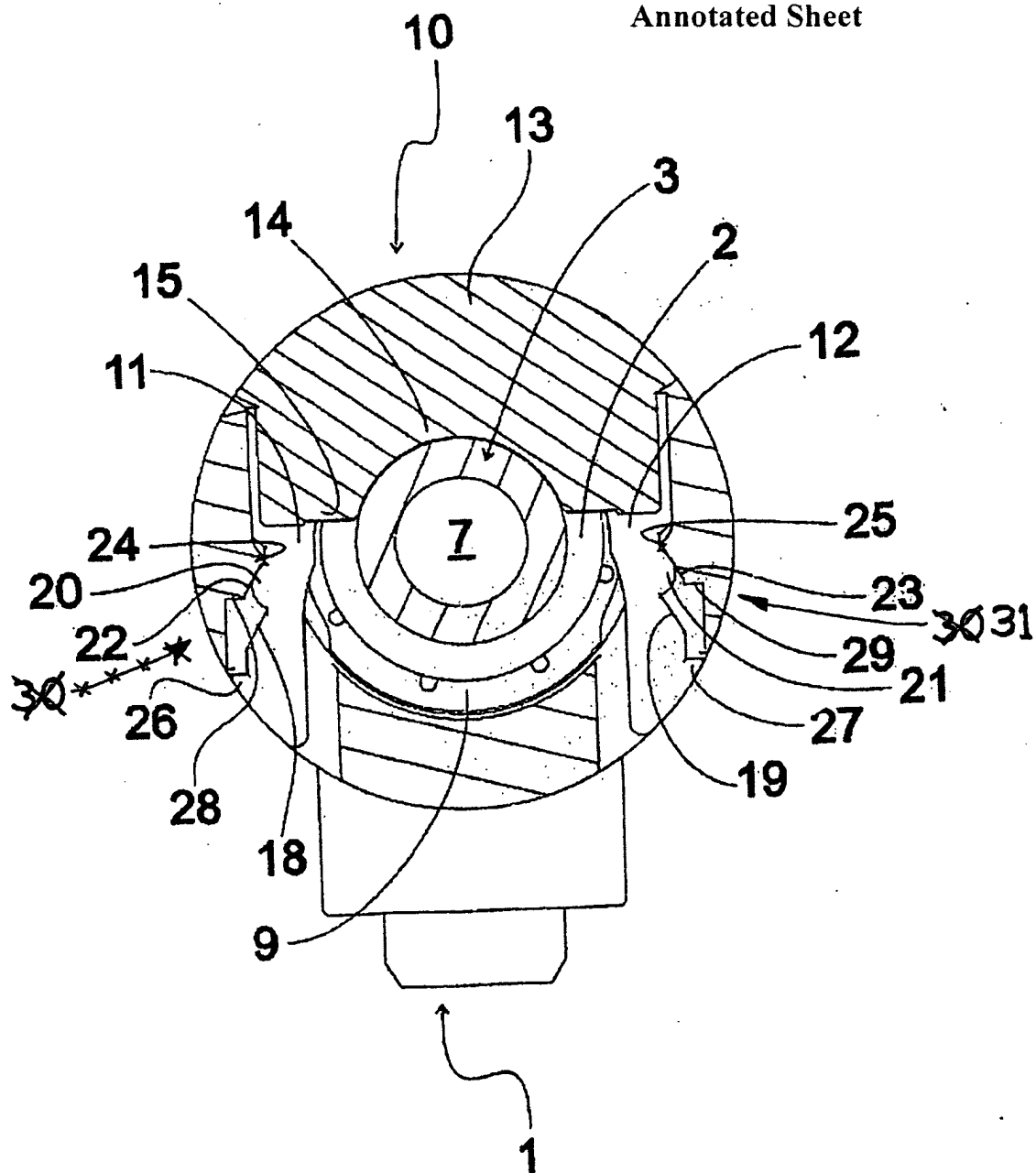


Fig. 5